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SOME REASONS WHY
RED SHIRTS REMEMBERED

By

William Arthur Sheppard

Author of

RED SHIRTS REMEMBERED:
SOUTHERN BRIGADIERS OF THE
RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD

Linotype Composition and Make-Up by
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INTRODUCTION

The official program of the sixth annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association announces joint sessions with the South Carolina Historical Association and the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston, South Carolina, November 7, 8 and 9, 1940. At a dinner tendered by The Citadel, with its President, General Charles P. Summerall presiding, Dr. D. D. Wallace of Wofford College, will present a paper on "The Question of the Withdrawal of the South Carolina Electors in the Presidential Election of 1876." Saturday, November 9, during a round table discussion of the Reconstruction Period, Robert H. Woody of Duke University and Francis B. Simkins of State Teachers College, Farmville, Virginia, will present "The Revisionists' View."

These gentlemen have been critical of "Red Shirts Remembered: Southern Brigadiers of the Reconstruction Period," by William Arthur Sheppard (Spartanburg, South Carolina; The Author: 1940). They failed in the first instance to find important material relating to the period, a task as elemental as answering the question, "He is charged with having written a letter—did he write it?" They failed in the second instance to find this new material in "Red Shirts Remembered," which students realize is an opening lead to the solution of questions that have perplexed such eminent historians as the late Dr. U. B. Phillips. The lack of adequate preparation for the duties they assumed they now attempt to conceal under dubious "it seems," and broad statements and innuendoes lending little dignity to the profession of which they are members.

"Red Shirts Remembered" is not offered as a substitute for anything, a fact obvious to mature minds. It was produced with much sweat (the type was set during a period of sixteen months between the morning hours of 3:00 and 6:00 o'clock, after the author had completed the duties of his job) that posterity might not be dependent upon the Parson Weems of the Reconstruction Period.

For the benefit of scholars who deem "vicious" the rapid sketch of Wade Hampton's background, the author reveals information that the Yazoo Fraud was treated at length by Albert J. Beveridge as long ago as 1919 ("The Life of John Mar-

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shall," in four volumes; Boston.), and by S. C. McLendon in 1924 ("History of the Public Domain of Georgia," Atlanta, Ga.) Hampton's confession to bankruptcy, the lists of his assets and liabilities, and other documents relating to the disposition of the case, are not of the author's "credulity," but are a part of the records of the United States District Court.

The linotypist chooses to examine every lead suggested by material coming to hand, arrange the facts in strict chronological order, and tell the story with as much color as can be legitimately applied. He gladly leaves to the scholars the odoriferous task of apologizing for Chamberlain, whose fine hand was adept at thievery, who prepared to cut the throats or crush the skulls of members of the Wallace House, and who was not "accepted" by South Carolinians except lawyers who hoped to profit by the association.

The linotypist leaves to the scholars the "biting witticisms" of Thomas J. Mackey, whose memory hangs over South Carolina to-day like the aroma of a fishmonger's scrap pile. He was not fit to lick the boots of either Henry S. Farley, who is not known to have been a guest at Oakly Park, or of Hugh L. Farley, who studied law there and paid for his keep by managing the owner's farming interests while General Gary sought to restore his health at the watering places of the Virginias. These facts are duly attested by letters and papers in the Gary manuscripts.

The author produced this work under tremendous pressure, the result of the brief interval between receipt of the official program and the details incidental to the building of his home. These facts deepen his appreciation for the kindness and loyalty of Max Bridges, Sr., General Manager of The Spartanburg Herald-Journal; of S. B. Ballard, Sr., Superintendent of the Press Room of these publications; of L. C. Wilson, also of these newspapers and member of the Housing Authority of the City of Spartanburg; and of Ernest King Hall, Chief of the Proof Room of The Spartanburg Herald.

The author renews his thanks to former Governor John Gary Evans for use of the Gary Manuscripts, a courtesy extended October 1, 1931.

WILLIAM ARTHUR SHEPPARD.

Spartanburg, South Carolina, November 2, 1940.

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Newspapers of the Reconstruction Period did not open their columns to irresponsible and obscure correspondents. This privilege was extended cautiously, usually after the editor had prepared the manuscript to conform with his opinions. Opposing viewpoints were reprinted for the purpose of writing in caustic comment, and for barbed editorial criticism. A resident of Barnwell County, South Carolina, knowing the habits of the journalists, sought outlet for a protest against conditions within the State, and found that the Augusta, Georgia, Constitutionalist shared his views.¹ Following the custom established before the War Between the States, and seldom departed from during the following decade, the editor printed the letter above the anonymous signature of "Barnwell."

Journalists themselves practiced anonymity. Born in England a Reeks, the editor of The News and Courier lived in South Carolina under the pseudonym of Francis W. Dawson.²

Thomas G. Clemson, whose largess was the beginning of Clemson College, complained bitterly that the press ignored his efforts to foster scientific agricultural education.³ Seeking to use the columns of The News and Courier during the political campaign of 1878, General Martin Witherspoon Gary sent his brother to Charleston to interview the editor.⁴ The mission was a failure. If the journalists gave thought to the constitutional provision that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of . . . the press," evidence indicates that they

(1) "If nine-tenths of the white readers of this State were called upon to give a candid opinion of what was most needed by them, I venture to say the reply would be, 'A good, substantial Democratic organ.'"—*Ci. Press and Banner*, Sept. 19, 1875.

(2) *The State*, Oct. 26, 1830.

(3) "That miserable sheet *The News & Courier* has taboo'd any thing that I have written, either over my name or with a 'non de plume.' I have lived in monarchies where the press was under censors, but I have never seen a press suborned as that of So. Carolina."—Gary MSS, Thomas G. Clemson to Gary, Oct. 8, 1878.

(4) "Dawson was absent. . . . I did not know Riordan but I called upon him. I gave him the opening which we agreed upon. I then told him that my object was to get the use of the columns of his paper for certain letters which I desired to write in your interest. That I wish them published and if he was not inclined to accept them that I desired to insert them as (sic) advertising rates. He fought shy and said he could make me no answer further than to say he would not print them as advertising rates but would consider whether he would permit them to appear. I told him if it was his purpose to print them simply to make editorial replies adverse to them I would decline to publish in his paper."—Gary MSS, Major William T. Gary to Gary, Sept. 21, 1878.

(5)

deemed it license to disregard the rights of others.⁵ The natural and logical result of this policy was resentment that developed into hostility toward the press.⁶

On January 10, 1877, The (Augusta, Georgia) Chronicle and Sentinel published a letter (vide post, 16) above the anonymous signature of "A Tilden Democrat." Two days later Alexander C. Haskell, Chairman of the South Carolina Democratic Executive Committee, replied. On January 15, Samuel McGowan of Abbeville, South Carolina, who was a Democratic presidential elector-at-large, replied to "A Tilden Democrat." Editors of The Chronicle and Sentinel, The Press and Banner of Abbeville, South Carolina, and the Columbia (South Carolina) Register printed editorials on the letter. The Press and Banner suspected the identity of the anonymous correspondent, declaring "he did about as much towards electing Hampton as any other man in the State."⁷

Thus, "A Tilden Democrat," an anonymous correspondent of a newspaper, brought forth official cognizance of the Chairman of the South Carolina Democratic Executive Committee, a presidential elector-at-large on the Democratic ticket, and editorial comment of at least three prominent newspapers.

Examination of the letter written by "A Tilden Democrat" reveals a calm, cogent approach to his protest against General Wade Hampton's dealings with Rutherford B. Hayes, Republican candidate for President of the United States. Judge T. J. Mackey, Radical member of the South Carolina judiciary, had gone to Columbus, Ohio, and carried letters written by Hampton to Governor Hayes, the evidence in support of which fact in that day, and in this, is too preponderate to admit a doubt. The correspondent was well equipped for his task, both with

(5) "Some of the papers of the State take the liberty of suppressing portions of communications to them, to make them tally with their views of eligibility. . . . If we are living in a land where a man can not speak his convictions on major public interests without incurring censure or misrepresentation, we who have no axes to grind, and whose earnest desire be the welfare of the State, then we had as well strike the flag of independence & liberty, and move to other skies."—Gary MSS, Thomas G. Clemson to Gary, Aug. 6, 1878.

(6) "The News and Courier must either be made to sustain our policy (i. e., the Straight-out Democratic ticket) or to quit the party, which it is defeating and disgracing."—Gary MSS, Wade Hampton to Gary, July 25, 1876. Cf. Shepard, 94.

(7) These letters were published in The Press and Banner, Jan. 24, 1877. Shepard, 193.

education and material. He had within easy reach the comment of newspapers on the mission representing a large section of the Nation, including that of The Louisville Courier-Journal, of which Henry Watterson was editor; and of The World (New York City), of which Manton Marble, Chairman of the Democratic National Executive Committee, was editor.

"A Tilden Democrat" was well equipped, and he was exercising a privilege inherent with every man who campaigned for the Democratic candidates, who left his home and business, endured the hardships of a winter such as seldom had been visited upon the State within the century and endangered his life in perilous journeys to remote meetings. It was the privilege of every woman who kept lone vigil in isolated farm homes while the white men of the community fought to throw off the yoke of venal government. It was the privilege of every child who, now in the seventies, recalls with horror the ordeal of that year. "A Tilden Democrat" was well within his rights to question the machinations of the politicians of his day, and more—he was doing his duty.

With a continuity rarely achieved by writers, he brought his protest to the revelation that Judge T. J. Mackey and Judge Thompson H. Cooke, another Radical jurist, approached Hampton with the suggestion that the Republican leaders would support him for Governor if he would withdraw the Democratic Presidential Electors, and thus insure the State to Hayes. Mackey promised to secure \$10,000 for Hampton's campaign. "General Hampton was willing and anxious that such an arrangement should be made," "A Tilden Democrat" declared.

To these charges, Alexander C. Haskell replied: "The piece could not have been published in this State," which is near enough to the truth. "I am cognizant of and officially possessed of every detail of the canvass," he wrote, and "not one jot of any secret of our political campaign has been revealed in the letter to which you refer." There is no other evidence in his communication of more than 3,000 words that Colonel Haskell was attempting to be funny.

But Haskell reveals that the Republicans did offer to trade for withdrawal of the Electors. "The proposition was discussed by the committee, but no action taken, except the resolution that nothing should be done without consultation with the

National Executive Committee. The next day Judge Cooke went to Abbeville to appear on the stand as a speaker in behalf of our party. Col. Hoyt of the Executive Committee went to Abbeville with him, and there, as instructed by the committee, conferred with Gen. Hampton and some other gentlemen. The reasons advanced were at first sight regarded very strong, but no decision was arrived at, except that no step should be taken without the approval of Mr. Tilden, on the ground that our position was embarrassing the national party—the withdrawal then to be under protest, stating the plot as laid down by Judges Mackey and Cooke, and announcing that we withdrew to prevent the intervention of military force, which would rob us of our constitutional rights.”

Adroit.

Haskell's reply reveals that General Hampton performed the role assigned to him. He wrote a letter to Manton Marble, a copy of which was released in Haskell's reply to "A Tilden Democrat."⁸ As the letter went the rounds of the press, there were changes enough in the text to create suspicion in the minds of those seeking the truth.

Thus, we learn from Haskell:

(1) That Judge Mackey and Judge Cooke appeared at the headquarters of the Democratic Party in Columbia the night of

(8)

"Walhalla, September 19, 1876.

"Dear Sir: There are some matters pertaining to the contest in this State upon which it is very important that the views of Mr. Tilden and his special friends should be known to us. I hope that you will communicate with me and speak with the same frankness I shall use with you. Our executive committee seems to apprehend that our friends at the North are embarrassed by our alliance with them. Of course this apprehension places our party here in an awkward position. If these apprehensions are well founded, how can we best relieve our friends at the North of their embarrassment? Before our convention met I wrote fully to Mr. Tilden, telling him what would probably be its action, and asking his advice so that we could promote the interests of the Democratic party. He did not reply to my letter, and I was forced by irresistible public opinion to accept the nomination for Governor. I have made the canvass thoroughly conservative, and it has been a perfect success so far. With aid from abroad the State can be carried for Tilden. There is no doubt of its being carried for our State ticket, for our opponents would gladly agree to let us elect our men if we withdrew from the Presidential contest. Of course we are most anxious to aid in the general election, but you can understand our solicitude to find out how we can best do this. If our alliance is a load, we will unload. If our friends desire us to carry on the contest as begun, we shall do so. If you will give me your views on these points I shall be indebted to you. With my good wishes, I am, very truly yours,
WADE HAMPTON.

"To Manton Marble, Esq."

(8)

September 15, 1876, and offered a bargain by which the white people were to govern the State in return for giving their support to the election of Hayes. The committee considered this proposal, and dispatched Cooke and Hoyt, who departed from the city early in the morning of September 16, to confer with Hampton, who was in Abbeville.

(2) That Hampton wrote to Manton Marble, Chairman of the Democratic National Executive Committee, and declared: "If our alliance is a load, we will unload."

Haskell's recital of these events reveals remarkable coincidences. Cooke and Mackey were attending the Republican Convention in Columbia. During the day following Governor Chamberlain's renomination they decided to bolt the party and join the Democrats. The same night they visited the Democratic headquarters, where "the proposition was discussed by the committee."

As a matter of fact, Judge Mackey attended a Republican campaign meeting at Edgefield on August 12, more than a month before this visit to the Democratic headquarters, with Governor Chamberlain, and as Chamberlain's friends and adviser. The Republican party met with an unexpected reception and were ignominiously routed by the Democrats under the leadership of General Gary. Chamberlain returned to Columbia the same day, but Mackey remained in Edgefield to renounce his affiliation with the Republican Party and make a speech for the Democrats. This conversion was widely published.⁹

"The proposition was discussed by the Committee," that night, because Cooke and Hoyt left Columbia early the following morning to convey the news to Hampton, who was more than one hundred miles distant from Columbia. Strange events occur, and here was one in which Cooke and Mackey happened in upon the State Democratic Executive Committee, consisting of seven men whose homes were in widely separated counties, but Haskell does not inform us that the committee had been called together to discuss the Republican trade.

Hampton wrote to Manton Marble, but he did not say: "We have just learned from Republican Judges Cooke and Mackey

(9) For a story of this meeting vide Sheppard (Red Shirts Remembered), 94-109.

(9)

that the Republican Party is willing to support the Democratic State ticket in return for the withdrawal of our Democratic Presidential Electors. The Republicans must be in desperate straits and fearful of losing the Presidential contest." His letter is an attempt to inveigle Tilden into disowning the Democrats of South Carolina; and Haskell tells us that Hampton was then prepared to place the blame for the withdrawal upon the Democratic candidate for President.

General McGowan corroborates that portion of Haskell's story relating to Cooke and Hoyt bringing the Republican offer to Abbeville, but says "the proposition was not entertained for one moment." The proposition was entertained at least from Saturday night, September 16, until Tuesday, September 19, when Hampton addressed his letter to Manton Marble.

Further evidence about the Republican proposition was brought out by the gubernatorial campaign of 1880. A dispatch from Columbia to The New York Times November 20, 1879, revealed that the campaign was well under way. General Gary, General Johnson Hagood, General Samuel McGowan and General Joseph B. Kershaw were candidates. "Hampton," the correspondent said, "is credited with the remark that he may perhaps find it necessary to resign his seat in the Senate to heal the increasing dissensions by becoming the next nominee for the position." Commenting on this statement, The (Abbeville) Medium, of which Robert R. Hemphill, a member of the Legislature, was editor, declared: "If such is his intentions it would be well for him to wait until he is elected Governor before he sends in his resignation."¹⁰

Gary resented the active support Hampton was giving to the election of Johnson Hagood as Governor of South Carolina.

(10) "If such is his intentions it would be well for him to wait until he is elected Governor before he sends in his resignation. Last week The Anderson Intelligencer contained a most capital suggestion about the part Hampton is taking in State politics which we re-echo with all possible emphasis. The people are the party and they are not to be controlled in their choice by any suggestion of any politician in the state or out of it. There has been entirely too much favoritism since the Democrats came into power. There has not been an election in this State for the last two years, general or special, in the Legislature or before the people, which the Government, either directly or through its allies, has not tried to shape to its wishes and control in its interests. The people are tired of this sort of thing and the fact that Hampton is not so popular or strong as he was in 1876 is due to his official meddling in matters with which he had no business."—The (Abbeville, S. C.) Medium, Dec. 4, 1879.

He knew, too, that the lesser politicians of the State were awaiting the result of this support¹¹ and preparing to cast lots with the apparent winner. Thus irked, he revealed in an interview released to The New York Herald December 5, 1879, that he had heard the Republican proposition from Hampton on the speakers' stand in Abbeville before the arrival of Cooke and Hoyt. According to his statement, Gary remonstrated but, after hearing Hampton through, agreed that if Hampton "and the rest were resolved to do it, I wouldn't make war on the conclusion. I've since heard that at a meeting held that night, but which I didn't attend, but at which Hampton, Toombs, Gen. McGowan and Col. Cothran were present, there was a hot time. McGowan wouldn't agree nohow, and the project fell through."

Hampton replied: "While I have never condescended to notice the rumors, of which The Herald speaks to-day, about Senator Hampton's infidelity to the Democratic electoral ticket in 1876, which have been floating in the air ever since; and while I cannot agree with The Herald that they have, as it says, now found a respectable sponsor in Gen. Gary, still as some one is at last found to father these slanders, I am induced to pronounce them utterly and absolutely false. . . . Soon after the election in 1876 an article appeared in an Augusta, Georgia, paper, of course anonymously, making the same charges and referring to Gen. McGowan, as Gary does now. He was behind them, as he is now, and this article, if not written by General Gary, was at least inspired by him."

Gary denied he wrote the "A Tilden Democrat" letter,¹² but Hampton's charge that he inspired it has been accepted with-

(11) An example of the position of the politicians, selected at random, follows: "I have for sometime past been watching with interest the progress of 'Old Mart' in the gubernatorial contest. He understands fully my personal and political feelings toward him. I was with him in the Convention of '76 and witnessed with pride and heartfelt sympathy his heroic efforts in behalf of straightout democracy and have never ceased to think and say that he there, before, and since established his claims to the highest position in the gift of our people. . . . Now although thus frank and I am always frank, I do not desire that you shall consider me as an unconditionally Gary man, for it is early in the campaign and we know not what new features it may assume, &c &c but these are my feelings and should my acts not conform, it will not be because I love Gary less but because I love Woodward more. In other words, I intend for the first time so help me God, to prefer self to friends."—Gary MSS, Thomas W. Woodward to Hugh L. Farley, Nov. 4, 1879.

(12) In an interview written by Alfred B. Williams, The News & Courier, Dec. 17, 1879.

out qualification.¹³ It has none of the earmarks of Gary's style, and "A Tilden Democrat" works with a precision that renders improbable he would have been so careless with notes, had Gary furnished the material, as to state that "When the State Democratic Convention assembled in Columbia in June, it was evident that Hampton would be the strongest candidate before it." The convention assembled August 15, 1876.

Gary habitually kept copies of his important letters, and memoranda wide as his interests, but there was no evidence in his papers in 1931 to support the statement he inspired "A Tilden Democrat." Moreover, facts surrounding Gary's activities during the fortnight before the letter was published militate against the theory. The news of Mackey's visit with Hayes was first published December 30, 1876. A snow storm began falling that Saturday night and raged throughout the week-end, blanketing the Piedmont of South Carolina and piling up drifts in places to twenty-four inches. On January 1, 1877, Gary presented a carefully drawn set of resolutions sustaining the Hampton Government at a public meeting in Edgefield.¹⁴ The weather that bore down during the following ten days forced the temperature as low as 2 degrees below zero, freezing Broad, Saluda and Savannah Rivers to the current of the streams, and rendered difficult if not impossible the primitive roads of the State.¹⁵ Oakly Park, at Edgefield, was at least five miles from Pine House, the nearest railroad station, and the occasional trains passing along that line offered few comforts in the frigid weather. There was no emergency so great as to tempt Gary away from the fireside or to bring visitors to Oakly Park.

Gary was not invited to the conference in Abbeville at which the Republican offer was discussed, although there was not a man in the State or out of it with greater claims on the Democratic Party of South Carolina. An author has said Hampton declined to invite Gary because he disliked the Bald Eagle,¹⁶ but the relations between the two men were cordial enough at the time, and subsequently, when Hampton was a

(13) Wallace, D. D. (The History of South Carolina), III, 329, footnote.
(14) Edgefield Advertiser, Jan. 4, 1877. Colonel James T. Bacon was editor.
(15) The Press and Banner (Abbeville, S. C.), Jan. 10, 1877. Hugh Wilson, editor.
(16) Wallace, III, 329.

guest at Oakly Park.¹⁷ The reason why Gary was not invited is that Hampton already knew Gary's opinions, because he had approached him on the speakers' platform while the campaign meeting was in progress during the afternoon.¹⁸

Gary sought witnesses to sustain his contention that the subject of withdrawing the Democratic Presidential Electors was discussed with him and later at Mrs. Norwood's home. James Sproull Cothran of Abbeville was first to respond.¹⁹

(17) During the campaign meeting at Edgefield, subsequent to that held at Abbeville, in 1876. Authority for this statement is the late Alfred B. Williams, with whom the author held several conversations at his home and in the book stacks of the Library of Congress. Miss Louella Gary made the same statement later, during the summer of 1931, at Oakley Park. This relative of general Gary said nothing to indicate she deemed the occasion one of honor to the household. General Hampton was sent to a boarding house in Abbeville, and his entertainment paid for by Armistead Burt.—Cl. Press and Banner, Sept. 20, 1876.

(18) "Personally appeared before me James N. King, of Abbeville County, South Carolina, who being sworn, says, that he was at Abbeville C. H. at the mass meeting, which took place on or about the 16th day of September 1876, and officiated as Marshal, having charge of the speakers stand. That he was on the stand, and occupied a seat very near Gens Hampton and Gary and heard the conversation between them relative to the withdrawal of the Tilden and Hendrix Electors, of which the statement, as made by Genl Gary is substantially true. Sworn and subscribed to before me, this 4th day of February, 1880.

"P. E. GLEASON, Not Pub J. N. KING."
Captain James N King represented Ninety Six at the Big Meeting of Sept 16, 1876, and was prominent enough to have had his goings and comings related by The Press and Banner. He spent the night of Sept. 15, 1876, at Wier Hotel in Abbeville, and later when his home was burned at Ninety Six, the fact was duly recorded and deplored by Hugh Wilson as having been of incendiary origin because of Captain King's Straight-out Democratic activities. Captain King was grandfather of Sam B. King, Insurance Commissioner of South Carolina.

(19) "Abbeville, S. C., Dec. 23d, 1879.

"My dear Gary: Yours of the 18th Inst. with interrogations was recd on Saturday last and I take the first moment of leisure to make the following statement of facts in reply: There was a meeting at Mrs. Norwoods the night of the Mass meeting at Abbeville in Sept 1876. Gov. Hampton, Genl Toombs, Col Simpson (now Gov S) Genl McGowan, Col Hoyt and I were present. The meeting was informal & no one presided. It was as I understood intended for conference upon a proposition submitted by the Dem. State Ex. Comt thro' Col Hoyt, its Secretary who had come to Abbeville on that day for that purpose. The proposition referred to was as to the propriety of withdrawing the Tilden Electors. Genl Toombs of Ga and Genl McGowan one of the candidates for Elector for the State at Large were the principal spokesmen—the first zealously urging the withdrawal, the other opposing.

"In proof of the former's zeal I remember his turning to me and requesting me to draw his draft upon one of the Banks of Augusta for \$10,000, which he proposed to sign. A general protest was the response to this generous offer. His reply was "the burden will fall lightly upon me. I will go home and appeal to my old constituency extending from Lightwood log creek to Tybee light and in 10 days the amount will be refunded to me." His conduct & manner were sublime and his words burning and eloquent. There was no other manifestation

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Cothran says General Toombs zealously urged withdrawal of the Democratic Electors. Toomb says his whole argument was against withdrawal.

Cothran states a political meeting had been arranged for the next day at Ninety Six, and one for the following day at Honea Path. The facts are that the conference was held Saturday night, September 16, 1876. The following day was Sunday, and no political meeting had been planned for Sunday. Nor had one been planned for Monday, September 18. Tuesday, September 19, a Democratic rally was held at Ninety Six, at which Judge Cooke substituted for Hampton.²⁰

Cothran says that "a political meeting had been arranged for the next day," which was Sunday, September 17, but that "Govr Hampton did not go to 96, but availed himself of a day to rest & write to the National Ex-Comt." This plainly intimates that Hampton remained in Abbeville—he rested, and Cothran knew it—but the letter Hampton wrote to Manton Marble, as released by Alexander C. Haskell, is dated "Walhalla, September 19, 1876."

If Hampton went to Walhalla, he did not rest. The distance

of 'heat' on the occasion and the proposition was not adopted. Genl T. alone urging it and to the last. It is perhaps proper to state in this connection that a political meeting had been arranged for the next day at 96 and one for the day following that at Honea Path in Anderson County. Govr Hampton did not go to 96, but availed himself of a day to rest & write to the National Ex Comt. to draw from them if possible a response to letters and telegrams previously sent to them and whose silence he thought he had just cause of complains.

"It was an open secret in the State at that time that Tilden did not approve of the nomination of Hampton & that many persons North who ardently desired the success of the Democratic party believed that affiliation with the S. C. Democracy led by a 'Southern Brigadier' would tend to jeopard that result. The unbroken silence of the Natl. Comt to the time of the meeting at Abbeville, and other facts well known at the time tended to confirm this belief. Nevertheless the Canvass in the State waxed hotter and hotter and I do not remember to have attended a single political meeting afterwards (and I went to all I could) that the claims of Tilden & Hendricks were not strenuously urged. Nothing like treachery to the National Democracy on the part of any of the leaders of the State Democracy or its followers, ever came to my knowledge and if there was anything in their conduct or sentiments so far as known to me savoring of disaffection or lukewarmness in the support of Tilden & H. it grew out of the belief that such was not desired by the Natl Ex Comt., who believed that the State was overwhelmingly Republican and the struggle here hopeless, in proof of which I may add that if ever a man or a dollar was sent into the State to promote the cause, the fact remans to this day unknown to me. Very truly yours,
J. S. COTHRAN."

(20) Press and Banner, Sept. 20, 1876. If Cooke ever supported Tilden, he was converted after the meetings at Ninty Six and Honea Path.

was at least seventy miles, and the mode of travel necessarily on horseback or in a buggy. Trains did not run on the Sabbath Day. A traveler journeying that distance Monday, September 18, by train would have departed from Abbeville at 8 o'clock in the morning and, good fortune attending him, arrived at Walhalla at fifteen minutes to 7 o'clock in the evening, according to the railroad schedule of that day. Hampton appeared on the platform at Honea Path, again with Judge Cooke, on Wednesday, September, 20.²¹

And so, "the campaign went on as before," Judge Cooke sharing the platform with Hampton at ten regularly scheduled Democratic campaign meetings.²² And Francis W. (Reeks) Dawson, with supernatural wisdom, knew before the votes of the following election that Hayes carried South Carolina.²³ Between Hampton and Hayes, Mackey became "our erratic friend," but nevertheless was deserving of a Federal pension as Hampton's first official act as Senator from South Carolina.²⁴

Robert Toombs's letter to Gary²⁵ speaks for itself.

(21) Sheppard, 148.

(22) For a list of these Democratic meetings, vide Sheppard 148.

(23) Sheppard, 157-158.

(24) Sheppard, 290.

(25)

"Washington, Ga., Jan. 29, 1880.

"Dear Sir: Yours of the 18th Inst. reached this place during my absence & was mislaid with one of Genl Hampton of about the same date, & other letters received during my absence. This has caused the delay which I very much regret as it given (sic) me pleasure to have promptly answered your interrogations. I was present at Abbeville Court House the day of the political meeting and discussion there in 1876. I was also present a meeting (sic) held that evening by some leading gentlemen of the Democratic party of South Carolina for consultation touching the canvass in the then approaching election for Federal & State officers in So. Carolina. I do not remember how many were present. I was the guest of Genl McGowan and accompanied him to the meeting. Genl. Hampton, Judge Simpson, Col. Haskell & others were present. I do not remember whether any person presided or whether any question was raised or formally noticed on by the meeting, I think there was some but on this point my recollection is not distinct. It was suggested by some person at the meeting that some of the most responsible Republicans of the State of So Carolina who were supporters of Genl Hampton but not of Tilden expressed opinion that if the Tilden ticket should be withdrawn, that Genl Hampton and the Democrats could easily carry the State. The suggestion met with decided opposition and as (one word illegible) I recollect no decided support. The effort of Tilden's friends at St. Louis to defeat Hampton's nomination for Govr & the refusal of his National committee to aid or assist in any way the canvass of South Carolina created a good deal of feeling with many of the friends of Genl Hampton & the Democracy as widely elsewhere, in which feeling I strongly participated & had publicly announced in Georgia my position not to vote for him in any event. But I believed it would be fatal to the Canvass in South Carolina to

withdraw the Democratic electoral ticket at that time. It was unwise to put it up, but still more unwise to take it down. My offer of pecuniary aid to carry on the canvass was not upon any condition to take down the Electoral ticket. My argument was against it & I considered that keeping up the ticket & pecuniary aid were both necessary measures to the result which I sought to aid the redemption of South Carolina by the election of Hampton & a Democratic majority in the legislature. I felt no sympathy with an organization who sought the vote of the 'Solid South' and were afraid of the (one word illegible) of her alliance. I am Respectfully truly Your friend, R. TOOMBS.

"P. S. I replied to Genl Hs letter yesterday. Yours truly, R. T."

(Chronicle and Sentinel [Augusta, Georgia] January 10, 1877)
EDITORS CHRONICLE AND SENTINEL:

I have observed that the Northern Democratic press do not seem to know what to make of Judge T. J. Mackey's recent visit to the Republican candidate for the Presidency, and of the extraordinary communcation which he bore from the legally elected Governor of South Carolina. I have observed also that Southern journalists seem to be equally as much befogged on this subject as their brethren of the North, and that even South Carolina editors either do not know, or else have declined to give, the true solution of a mystery more apparent than real. Northern and Southern newspapers have been swift to condemn the embassy, the ambassador and the document which he bore as a mistake upon the part of Gov. Hampton. Northern and Southern members of Congress and Democratic politicians generally have deplored the act as one calculated to injure the Democratic party and to weaken the chances of the inauguration of Tilden. They have said that it seemed an admission by a prominent Southern Democratic leader—one who had just fought and won a desperate battle in a State long considered hopelessly Republican—that the national Democratic ticket had been defeated, and that the Republican candidate was legally elected President of the United States, and as such came at a most inopportune time and had done much mischief. The Louisville Courier-Journal, one of the leading Democratic papers of the West, whose editor is generally supposed to be high in the confidence of Gov. Tilden, declares that the letter "fell like a wet blanket on the Demo-

crats in Washington City." It says, "Gen. Hampton's Southern friends and admirers are deeply mortified at the step he has taken. The opinion of the best observers is that the situation is rendered deeply critical by these utterances, and so far from the prospect of a collision being lessened by letters like these, it is greatly increased. The Republicans are justly encouraged by these demonstrations." &c. The New York World has been equally outspoken and has deplored a mistake that was so injurious in its effects. The New York Herald said the letter "added to the demoralization of the Democrats," and that if Hampton could obtain the recognition of his State Government he would not object to the inauguration of Hayes as the price of such recognition. Senator Robertson, in the published report of his interview with a reporter of the New York Herald, went quite as far as this, if not further. "The Democrats in South Carolina," he said, "would have preferred the election of Tilden, but were not unwilling to consent to the election of Hayes, provided they could get an honest Democratic government in their own State." And again: "In his campaign speeches Hampton told all to vote for Hayes and Wheeler who wanted to. He put the question of who should be President away behind the question of administration of State affairs." As the report of his interview was published in the New York Herald of Dec. 30, and has not been contradicted, it is but fair to assume that Senator Robertson spoke the truth. I make these prefatory statements for the purpose of showing that the Mackey embassy has done harm to the Democratic cause, and that Northern and Southern journals have not attempted to give any ex-

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planation of an act from which have resulted such unfortunate consequences. The generally received opinion seems to be that it was an error of judgment that Gen. Hampton was deceived by the wiles of Mackey, and let his solicitude for his State betray him into an act which he would not otherwise have committed. Even in this view of the case it is considered an egregious mistake, because most men are confident that as soon as Tilden is inaugurated the bayonets will be withdrawn from Louisiana and South Carolina, and the bogus governments of those States will fall to the ground beneath the weight of their own corruption; that if Hayes be declared elected President, Chamberlain and Packard will be declared legal Governors and kept by Federal power in the positions which they have usurped. It has also been said that Mackey exceeded his instructions and made representations for which he had no authority for making. But as Gen. Hampton has not repudiated any act or deed of his envoy, though requested to do so, this position seems scarcely tenable. From information given to me recently, and which I have reason to believe is entirely trustworthy, it seems that Gen. Hampton knew exactly what he was doing when he despatched Mackey to Columbus, and that the latter did and said nothing not warranted by his principal. I do not mean to be understood as saying that Gen. Hampton is indifferent to the success of the national Democracy; but if what I hear be true, he was by no means an enthusiastic supporter of Tilden, and is not unwilling to concede the election of Hayes, provided the latter will recognize the conservative State government of South Carolina.

The St. Louis Convention

It is necessary to go back a little and say something of events which transpired prior to Gen. Hampton's election last November. It is well known that last spring there was a formidable faction in South Carolina in favor of the nomination or endorsement of Chamberlain on a reform platform. The Charleston News and Courier strenuously advocated such a course, and many of

the leading politicians of the State supported the policy proposed by that paper. The "straight-out" movement, as it is termed, which culminated in the election of a Democratic Governor and a Democratic Legislature last November, originated, if I am not mistaken, in the Counties of Edgefield and Anderson, and Gen. M. C. Butler of Edgefield, early in the spring, nominated Gen. Hampton as a suitable candidate for Governor. General Hampton had recently returned from his Mississippi plantation, and it was believed that he would not refuse to make the fight against Chamberlain. Another wing of the South Carolina Democracy were in favor of a straight-out campaign, but opposed to the nomination of Gen. Hampton, because they did not believe him conservative enough to win the battle. Among these, it was said, were Gen. John Bratton, Gen. John D. Kennedy and Col. James H. Rion, and perhaps Col. James A. Hoyt. The gentlemen went to the St. Louis convention, and the first named was chosen Chairman of the South Carolina delegation. At St. Louis the delegation met Col. Pelton, a nephew of Gov. Tilden, and one of the active, though quiet, organizers of that gentleman's political campaign. While in St. Louis it is understood that South Carolina politics were fully discussed by the delegation with Col. Pelton, and the latter gentleman strongly advised against the nomination of Gen. Hampton. He urged that some man of less prominence and of more known conservative views, should be selected as the candidate, and said that the nomination of Hampton would injure the party at the North. It was generally recognized that the candidacy of Hampton would be distasteful to Gov. Tilden because the latter feared it would work mischief to the national Democracy.

The Columbia Convention

In the mean time Gen. Gary and others had continued to urge the nomination of Hampton upon the people of the State, and the idea took so well that it soon became apparent the movement would become successful in spite of the strenuous opposition which the

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scheme encountered. He had intimated his willingness to run, and his high personal character and brilliant military record made him a favorite with the people. When the State Democratic Convention assembled in Columbia in June, it was evident that Hampton would be the strongest candidate before it. Gov. Tilden, however, had not abandoned his opposition to this candidacy, and was represented in Columbia during the session of the Convention by Col. Coyle of Washington City. This gentleman conferred with the most prominent of the delegates, and, in the name of his chief, warmly remonstrated against the propriety and policy of the proposed step. It was explained to him that Gov. Tilden was entirely mistaken in his estimate of Hampton's character—that the later instead of being an ultra Democrat and a fire eater, was very prudent, cautious and conservative, would unite all factions and make a stronger race than almost any man in the State. Moved by these statements, Col. Coyle finally proposed to telegraph to headquarters on the subject. He sent a telegram to Col. Pelton, who had been with the Carolina delegation at St. Louis, asking his opinion. The answer was short and to the point: "Gen. Kennedy knows my views with regard to the nomination of Gen. Hampton." Gen. Kennedy knew that Gov. Tilden was strongly opposed to such a nomination and so stated. Unless I am misinformed, General Bratton subsequently went into the convention as a candidate against Gen. Hampton, but was defeated. Those who know Gen. Hampton will not be surprised to learn that when he heard of this interference and opposition he was deeply angered, and was inclined to withdraw his name from the consideration of the convention. He was finally overruled by his friends, and consented to run for Governor.

A Letter That Was Not Answered

After this matter had been arranged and the Democracy had fairly commenced that memorable canvass which attracted the attention of the whole Nation, still other things occurred tending to widen the breach between Hampton and

Tilden. I learn that with a view of restoring that entente cordiale which should exist between the Democratic candidate for Governor of a State and the Democratic President of the United States, Gen. Hampton wrote a letter to the latter, after his nomination, assuring him of his hope of carrying the State. This letter received no reply, though common civility should have dictated an answer. I understand that Gov. Tilden's explanation is that he was too busy to attend to the matter. This is scarcely a valid excuse from one who had a regiment of clerks at his command. But this was not all. The South Carolina Democrats were poor, and needed money for campaign purposes. The State Democratic Executive Committee wrote to Hon. H. S. Hewitt, Chairman of the National Executive Committee, reciting their necessities and asking for some assistance. Mr. Hewitt replied that he had no money to give them, and said, in effect, that they must take care of themselves. These successive rebuffs, taken in connection with Tilden's opposition to Hampton's nomination, naturally enough irritated the latter and made the Democratic Presidential nominee anything but a favorite with him. Who can well wonder at his feelings when these facts are remembered?

Tilden's Candidacy Not Recognized

It is not astonishing, then, that in the campaign which ensued Gen. Hampton confined himself to making votes for the State ticket, and let the national prejudices and the candidacy of Gov. Tilden severely alone. I am credibly informed that from the opening of the canvass at Anderson Court House to its close in the City of Columbia, Hampton had scarcely a word to say on the subject of national politics, and almost refused to recognize the candidacy of Tilden. In his Darlington speech, when he said he should vote for Tilden, he also complimented Hayes, and said he accorded to the latter all the capacity and patriotic worth attributed to him by his most ardent supporters. Hampton invariably took the position that he stood on a platform higher than party; viz., the platform of honesty,

reform, economy and good government—a platform on which the whites and blacks, Radicals and Democrats, could all stand.

Proposed Abandonment of Tilden

But this is not all. It will be remembered that at one time it was reported that a proposition had been made by certain Republican leaders in South Carolina to support Hampton against Chamberlain if the former would have the Tilden electoral ticket withdrawn. It was generally believed that General Hampton declined to consider such a proposition. This is not the fact. I am informed he favored such a course when it was suggested, and that want of time alone prevented it from being taken. Judges Mackey and Cooke, who saw that Hampton was dissatisfied with the way he had been treated, and the Republican Congressman Hoge, made overtures to him on this subject, promising that if the Tilden electoral ticket was withdrawn they would support the Democratic State ticket and insure its success. Mackey even went so far as to say that if these terms were accepted, he could secure \$10,000 from the National Republican Executive Committee for the Hampton campaign. Gen. Hampton was willing and anxious that such an arrangement should be made. At what is known as the "Big Meeting" in Abbeville, this proposition was made to Gen. McGowan, one of the candidates for elector from the State at large on the Tilden ticket. Gen. Toombs of Georgia is reported to have been present when the scheme was suggested, favored the withdrawal, and himself offered to give \$10,000 to the Hampton campaign fund. Gen. McGowan declined to be a party to such a proceeding, but there is little doubt that the withdrawal would have been attempted if the step had not been proposed at such a late day. In order to accomplish it legally, it would have been necessary to have a State convention of the Democratic Party, and by the time such a convention had assembled and acted, it would have been too late for the action to have much effect upon the canvass. This alone prevented a Hayes and Hampton can-

vass, for Hampton's word was law, and Hampton favored the withdrawal.

How Tilden Lost the State

Though this scheme failed, the spirit which inspired it survived and made itself felt in the campaign and at the election. It is not too much to say that the State was lost to Tilden and the national Democracy through the policy pursued by Gen. Hampton. These two Republican Judges—Cooke and Mackey—canvassed the State with Hampton from the time of the Abbeville meeting until the close of the campaign, and everywhere spoke from the platform occupied by the Democratic candidate in advocacy of the election of Hayes and Wheeler and Hampton. Tilden and Hendricks seemed entirely forgotten, and the whole fight was made against Chamberlain. With this change there was also a change in the tactics employed. The most ultra conservatism was practiced. With the tacit repudiation of Tilden and Hendricks there was also a repudiation of the plan of campaign adopted. There was a milk and cider, "peace and prosperity," conciliation of Radicals and flattery of negroes policy, instead of the bold and aggressive policy inaugurated by the straight-out leaders, and thus a majority of ten of fifteen thousand votes was lost to Tilden in South Carolina, while the State ticket was only elected by a bare majority. Though the straight-outs brought about his nomination in the face of a tremendous opposition from within the Democratic Party, and though their courage and skill had much to do with redeeming the State, they claim to have been practically ignored by Gen. Hampton when he selected the State Executive Committee. Five out of six of these gentlemen failed to carry their own counties in the election, while the straight-outs carried Edgefield, Laurens, Abbeville, Barnwell, Aiken and Colleton by storm. Richland, Gen. Hampton's own county, went heavily against him. It is safe to say that but for the fatal mistake made in this campaign—the desertion of Tilden and the surrender to Cooke and Mackey—the majority

for the State and national ticket would have been too large to admit of investigation or question.

This is the leaf of secret history given to me. The facts as stated remove any mystery connected with Mackey's mission to Columbus, and makes his embassy the logical sequel of events. Names and dates are given with great particularity, and so many witnesses are mentioned that if any of the statements above made are incorrect, it will be an easy matter to disprove them.

A TILDEN DEMOCRAT.

LETTER FROM
GENERAL M'GOWAN

Abbeville, S. C., Jan. 15, 1877.

Editors Chronicle and Sentinel:

A friend has this moment brought to my attention a communication in your paper of the 10th instant, over the signature of "A Tilden Democrat," upon the subject of the late canvass in South Carolina. Our court is now in session, and I have little time at my command; but as reference is made to me by name, it seems proper that I should make a short statement. I shall not, in this hurried manner, attempt to do more than refer to the matter which concerns myself. Other gentlemen can speak for themselves.

I was one of the electors at large for the State of South Carolina on the Democratic ticket, and as such, in association with other electors, had in charge specially the interests of Tilden and Hendricks.

Gen. Hampton, with the other gentlemen on the State ticket, and the electors, canvassed the State together, and spoke at the same appointments made by the State Executive Committee. I heard and believe it is true, that the proposition was made during the canvass by certain Republican leaders in the State to support Hampton against Chamberlain if the former would have the Democratic electoral ticket withdrawn. Such a proposition, however, I had not heard of until in our progress we had reached Abbeville, where Judge Cooke, believed to be one of the Republican leaders referred to, made his first speech for Hampton. At that place the matter was brought to our attention and

was talked about, but the proposition was not entertained for one moment. . . . It was suggested that possibly they might consider the active campaign which we were obliged to make in this State as calculated to damage them in other States. Yet, in the absence of information on that subject, it was concluded that the struggle for the State Government was not inconsistent with an effort to aid in the larger struggle to redeem the general Government; and that nothing should induce even the consideration of the proposed withdrawal, unless the Executive Committee of the National Democratic Party should request it.

The campaign went on as before. Gen. Hampton, being a candidate for Governor, confined himself in his speeches chiefly to the State politics. I believe he considered the election of the State ticket as more important than the election of the national ticket, but I know he desired the election of both. The consultation at Abbeville, which was not generally known, had no effect whatever in chilling the enthusiasm for Tilden and Hendricks. The electors continued to speak at the appointments made for Hampton and the State ticket, and carried on the fight for Tilden and Hendricks with all the power and vigor they possessed up to the very day of the election. Indeed, they did not cease their efforts then, but believing they had carried the State fairly, they cast the electoral vote for Tilden and Hendricks and sent it to Washington. In order, if possible, to reap the fruits of their labors, they have continued the struggle up to the present hour. . . .

Under these circumstances it is mortifying to fail, if that must be the result. It is more mortifying to fail by a mere handful of votes—less than 500; but it is still more mortifying, because it is unjust, to be told that the State gave a lukewarm support to Mr. Tilden, and was lost to the national Democracy by the bad "policy" of one who was not an elector, but a candidate for Governor.

Yours, respectfully,

S. M'GOWAN.